

L Suppl. Response
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12-17002
Case 7021

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of :
Owen M. PATTERSON : Group Art Unit: 3711
Serial No. 09/977,331 : Examiner: Graham, Mark S.
Filed: October 16, 2001 :
For: GOLF PUTTING PRACTICE DEVICE :

SUPPLEMENTAL RESPONSE

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DEC 11 2002

TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

Honorable Commissioner of Patents
and Trademarks
Washington, DC 20231

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DEC 10 2002
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Dear Sir:

An interview was conducted with the examiner on November 19, 2002 for purposes of discussing the rejection as set forth in the Office Action of July 30, 2002. In view of the interview and supplemental to the Response and Request For Reconsideration filed on October 30, 2002, applicant submits the following.

In the Office Action of July 30, 2002, claims 4, 5, 10-16, 18, 19, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner wherein it is stated that Wagner discloses the claimed device with the exception of the dimensions and weight. It is further stated that it is commonly known in the practice putting target art to vary the size/weight of such devices depending on the training method used and it would have been obvious to one or ordinary skilled in the art to have done the same with the Wagner target for the same reason.

Reconsideration of this rejection is requested for the following reasons.

It was acknowledged during the interview that the capture disc of Wagner is for harvesting and lifting golf balls and is not a target against which a golf ball is hit. The front elevational view of Wagner illustrates the intended alignment of the lifting device. Since Wagner is not enabling for a target, there can be no prior art suggestion for the modification as set forth in the Official Action.

In the alternative, the modification proposed in the Office Action renders the Wagner device inoperable for its intended purpose since it cannot function to lift golf balls when disposed on its side. See In re Gordon et al., 221 USPQ 1125 (CAFC 1984) [realignment of pump by turning it upside down held to be improper modification since it rendered the device inoperable for its intended purpose]. It is respectfully asserted the rejection of claims 4, 5, 10-16, 18, 19, 21 and 22 is therefore improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 7 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wagner. Reconsideration of this rejection is requested because the features recited in these claims are not shown in the applied prior art. Claim 2 recites a substantially flat surface for the truncated cone. The perimeter edge of Wagner is arcuate and irregular and not substantially flat. Claim 7 recites a bore having top and bottom shoulders. The central bore

of Wagner is smooth and does not include top and bottom shoulders. Claim 17 recites top and bottom portions that are mirror images of each other. The top and bottom surfaces of Wagner are not mirror images. They are configured to permit adjacent discs to interconnect in a side by side relation. In view of the above, reconsideration of these rejected claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wagner. In the Response And Request For Reconsideration as well as during the interview applicant asserted Wagner cannot function as an anticipatory reference because it is not enabling for a target. See Chester v. Miller, 15 USPQ2d 1336 (Fed. Cir. 1990) and In re Donohue, 226 USPQ 619 (Fed. Cir 1985). The examiner disagrees with applicant and cites In re Schreiber as providing support for anticipation of claim 1 by Wagner notwithstanding the failure of the reference to enable for a target. However, the facts surrounding the In re Schreiber decision are readily distinguished from that of the present case. The prior art and the claimed device of In re Schreiber were both dispensers (oil and popcorn respectively) and the court had little trouble in finding that the prior art oil dispenser enabled for use as a popcorn dispenser. In addition, the court stated that nothing in the disclosure of the prior art reference suggested it was limited for use as an oil dispenser. See In re Schreiber, 44 USPQ2d at 1433. In the present application, the Wagner disc as

depicted in the front elevation view of the drawings is not intended to rest on its side. As shown in the Tucek device cited in Wagner, a golf ball capture disc is incorporated into a golf ball retriever utilizing a number of spaced capture discs mounted on a common shaft, the spacing of the capture discs corresponding to the width of a golf ball so that as the capture discs move over a ground surface, golf balls are caught between adjacent capture discs. The Wagner capture disc does suggest a use other than as golf ball lifting device. Accordingly, the capture disc of Wagner does not enable for a target and therefore is not an anticipatory reference.

In view of the above, it is respectfully requested a Notice of Allowance be issued with respect to all the claims as filed.

It is believed no fees are due; however, should that determination be incorrect, charge the deficiencies to Deposit Account No. 19-2105 and notify the undersigned in due course.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 12/10/02


Michael M. Zadrozny
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 30,985

SHLESINGER, ARKWRIGHT & GARVEY LLP
3000 South Eads Street
Arlington, Virginia 22202
(703) 684-5600
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